

Child Care Subsidies

A Booklet for Licensed and Certified Child Care Providers

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

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Which Child Care Subsidy Programs are discussed in this booklet?

This booklet explains how Washington State pays for the following child care subsidy programs:

- Working Connections Child Care (WCCC)
- Seasonal Child Care
- Children's Administration Child Care Programs

What types of child care qualify for DSHS Child Care Subsidies payments?

Families choose their own child care provider. Washington State child care subsidy programs pay for licensed child care, certified child care, out of state providers who meet their state's licensing requirements, and contracted seasonal day camps. WCCC is the only program that pays for seasonal day camps.

Some programs also pay for child care provided in the child's home or care provided by a relative in the relative's home.

Licensed Child Care

Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) licenses child care centers and family home child cares.

Certified Child Care

DSHS certifies tribal programs, public schools, and military facilities that have their own approved licensing programs.

Contracted Child Care

DSHS contracts with some seasonal day camps that have been certified by the American Camping Association.

This booklet only addresses care by licensed or certified child care providers and DSHS contracted seasonal day camps. Call your local Division of Child Care and Early Learning (DCCCEL) office for information about the licensing process.

How does DSHS set the maximum rates for Child Care Subsidy Programs?

DSHS conducts a survey of child care providers every two years. The rate information received from the survey is used to set the DSHS maximum child care rates. Contact the family's authorizing office* for the current DSHS maximum child care subsidy rates for your region or find the rates on the internet. You can find family home child care rates at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=388-290-0205> and centers rates at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=388-290-0200>. When you care for a child who receives DSHS child care subsidies, bill DSHS your usual private rate or the DSHS maximum rate, **whichever is less**.

Your usual rate may be higher than the DSHS maximum child care subsidy rate. However, if you provide child care for a family who receives child care subsidies, you may not charge the family the difference between the DSHS rate and your usual private child care rate.

Payment rates vary depending on:

- **DSHS region where you live**
- **Amount of child care needed**
- **Type of child care program**
 - Certified or licensed child care center, or DSHS contracted seasonal day camp** may be licensed for children from one month up to 13 years of age. To care for a child outside of the ages you are licensed for, you must have a waiver from your licensor.
 - Certified or licensed family home child care** may be licensed for children from birth up to 12 years of age. To care for a child outside of the ages you are licensed for, you must have a waiver from your licensor.
- **Child's age group**
 - Infant:** birth through 11 months
 - Toddler:** 12 months through 29 months;
 - Preschool:** 30 months through 5 years of age, has not attended kindergarten
 - School-age:** 5 years of age, has attended kindergarten: through 12 years of age

*The family's authorizing office telephone number is on the Social Service Notice.

What DSHS Child Care Subsidy Region am I in?

Region 1:

Adams, Asotin, Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Whitman (Centers in Whitman county are paid at Region 6 rates.)

Region 2:

Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Kittitas, Walla Walla, Yakima (Centers in Benton and Walla Walla are paid at Region 6 rates.)

Region 3:

Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom

Region 4:

King

Region 5:

Kitsap, Pierce

Region 6:

Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Klickitat, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum (Centers in Clark county are paid at Region 3 rates.)

**Note: For child care subsidies Asotin and Garfield counties are in Region 1.
On most DSHS maps these counties are in Region 2.**

What is “full-time” child care?

A full-time child care authorization is for 22 full-days or 22 or more half-days per month. Authorizations for less than 22 full-days or 22 half-days are **not** full-time.

Why are some authorizations for half-days and others for full-days?

DSHS authorizes child care for half-days or full-days, based on the total number of child care hours the child needs each month. The number of hours DSHS authorized is based on the family’s schedule. DSHS authorized:

- **Half-days** when care is needed for less than 110 hours per month. A half-day is fewer than 5 hours a day. A full-time, half-day authorization is 22 days a month. DSHS may authorize up to 30 half-days. The extra 8 half-days, above 22, allow you to bill for an extra half-day when you provide 5 or more hours of care a day.
- **Full-days** when care is needed for 110 or more hours per month. A full-day is 5 to 10 hours of care per day. A full-time, full-day authorization is 22 days a month. DSHS may authorization additional care when a parent needs more than 10 hours of care to support an approved activity.

The parent must contact their authorizing office* if there are changes in their child care needs.

Note: For Seasonal Child Care Program policies see Appendix A.

* The family’s authorizing office telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

What is a Social Services Notice?

Social Services Notice for new or changed authorizations

DSHS enters the child care authorization into the Social Services Payment System (SSPS). When SSPS processes the information they will send you a letter called a Social Services Notice. You should get the notice about a week after the service is authorized. If you do not receive a notice, call the family's authorizing office.*

The Social Services Notice lists the:

- Authorized services
- Maximum authorized rates
- Maximum amount of child care authorized
- Amount of the family's monthly copayment
- Time period of the authorization
- Services changed or terminated
- Name and telephone number of the family's authorizing office*

When you get the Social Services Notice:

- Check to be sure children's names, amount of care, and dates of service match the information you have received from the family. Be sure the rates are the DSHS rates or your rate, **whichever is less**. If there is a problem, call the family's authorizing office.*

The Social Services Notice can be used to track the end date of the family's authorization. To be sure child care subsidies continue, you may want to remind families when their authorization is near the end date.

SSPS will process changes in an authorization and send you another Social Services Notice. Some changes will generate a Social Services Notice stating subsidies are ended (terminated). For example, if the family's child care needs change from full-day to half-day, you will receive a Social Services Notice stating full-day care is terminated. SSPS will then send another Social Services Notice to inform you of the new half-day authorization. If you have any questions about the Social Services Notice contact the family's authorizing office.*

* The family's authorizing office name and telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

What is the Working Connections Information Phone?

The Working Connections Information Phone (WCIP) is an automated phone system that allows you to access Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) information. Information about other child care subsidy programs cannot be accessed through the WCIP.

By calling **1-866-218-3244** you can access information about:

- The status (approved, denied, or pending) of a WCCC case and the effective date
- What child care services, including the copayment, are authorized for payment and the dates covered
- Special messages about the WCCC Program

To access the **WCIP** you need:

- Your SSPS Child Care Provider Number (This is the six digit number found on the upper left side of your SSPS Social Service Notice, on your license, or on your SSPS Remittance Notice)
- Your Employee Identification Number or the last four digits of your Social Security Number (to set a Personal Identification Number)
- The family's child care application number (This is the 10 digit number found on the right hand corner of the SSPS Social Service Notice or on the WCCC award letter)

WCIP is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and is available in English and Spanish.

Information is available to parents receiving WCCC by calling **The Answer Phone** at **1-877-980-9220** (for access, parents need their client ID number and SSN).

When does DSHS pay the Special Needs Child Care Rate?

DSHS pays a special needs rate for children under the age of 19 with a physical, mental, emotional, behavioral condition requiring a higher level of care. The special needs rate may also be paid for a child under the age of 19 who is under court supervision.

The family works with the authorizing office to decide if their child qualifies for the special needs rate. Contact the family's authorizing office* for the current DSHS special needs rates for your region or find the rates on the internet. For child care centers see <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=388-290-0225>. For family home child cares see <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=388-290-0230>. DSHS will authorize the special needs rate or your additional cost of caring for that child, **whichever is greater**. You must provide proof of an additional cost. The cost must be approved by DSHS before it is authorized.

* The family's authorizing office name and telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

When does DSHS pay a registration fee?

DSHS pays registration fees to licensed or certified child care providers and DSHS contracted seasonal day camps. DSHS will pay a registration fee of \$50.00 per child or your usual registration fee **whichever is less**. The registration fee may be authorized when the child is first enrolled in your care. DSHS will also pay the fee once per calendar year if you have a written policy to charge this fee of all parents every year. Payment may be authorized more than once per year if the child leaves your care and returns more than 60 days later.

When does DSHS pay field trip fees?

Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) is the only program that pays a field trip fee. DSHS authorizes the field trip fee only to licensed or certified child care providers. You must have a written policy to charge a field trip fee for all families, subsidized and non-subsidized (private pay). You may bill the actual cost of field trips up to \$20 a month for a child three years old or older.

The field trip fee covers

- Admissions
- Transportation (not including your gas or insurance)
- The cost of hiring a non-employee to provide an activity at your child care

The field trip fee does not cover

- Optional programs for children such as dance, yoga, gymnastics, computer classes, or swimming lessons
- Any of the cost of your staff, volunteers, or parents who participate in the activity

Claiming the field trip fee

Some months you may only need to bill part of the fee. If you spend less than \$20.00 on field trips only bill the actual amount you spent. If you did not use the field trip fee that month write “0” in the “Total Units” box. If the “Total Units” box is left blank the invoice will be returned to you for correction. **You must save your field trip receipts to support your billing if you are audited. DSHS considers it an overpayment if you do not have receipts to support your billing.**

Field trips that cost more than the DSHS authorized amount

You might spend more on field trips that DSHS authorized. You may charge families who receive WCCC the additional cost of the field trip *only* if you charge all families. For example, the total cost for field trips is \$70.00 for the month. You may bill DSHS \$20.00 and then ask the family to pay the additional \$50.00. If the parent will not pay the extra cost, you may decide not to take the child on the field trip. If the child doesn’t go, you must still provide developmentally appropriate care for that child during the time of the field trip. Do not bill DSHS if the child does not go on the field trip.

What is an absent day?

DSHS allows up to 5 absences **each month for each child who is authorized for full-time care. Full-time care means** 22 full-days or 22 or more half-days per month. DSHS considers each full-time month as 22 days, although actual working days per month will vary from 19 to 23.

Holidays are counted as absent days if the child discontinues care before the holiday occurs.

Which days are considered holidays?

The official state holidays are: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

Your holidays for DSHS billing are considered the day the holiday is observed by the State of Washington.

Consider the holiday as a day attended if:

- You are closed
- You are open and the child does not attend
- You are open and the child attends

Count the holiday as an absent day if:

- A child is authorized full-time and leaves care before the holiday

If you are open on a holiday and close the next day you may not bill the day you closed as the holiday. It is a closure day. Holidays are not exchangeable.

What is a Closure Day?

Closure days are days your child care facility is closed for reasons other than professional training.

- You may not bill DSHS for closure days
- You must subtract the number of closure days from the total number of days you bill for on your invoice

Closure days are **not** considered absent days and cannot be billed as absent days.

What is a professional training day?

As of January 1, 2006, DSHS allows licensed and certified child care providers to bill for 3 professional training days each calendar year. A professional training day is when your child care is closed so you and your staff can participate in training required by your licensing WAC.

If a child is scheduled to attend on the day you are closed for professional training, bill as if you were open and the child attended. You may only bill for children who were scheduled to attend on the day you close. For example: If a child is scheduled to attend only Monday through Thursday and you close for a professional training day on:

- Monday, the day is considered the same as if the child attended
- Friday, the day is considered an absent day

Keep records of your professional training days in case you are audited.

Do I bill the same number of total units pre-printed on my invoice?

When you get an invoice, it will show a pre-printed **maximum** number of billing units. You may not be eligible to bill the maximum number of units that are printed on your invoice. To bill correctly, refer to your attendance records and follow the billing rules in this booklet. If you bill for more than you are eligible to receive **it is an overpayment**.

When you are billing remember:

- Children must attend your child care at least one day that month for you to claim any payment for that month
- You may bill for up to 5 absent days per month per child
- You may only claim absent days when the child is authorized for 22 full-days, or 22 or more half-day units
- You may not charge the parent for absent days, even when the child is absent more than the 5 state paid absent days

The child must attend your child care at least one day in the month for you to bill any payment for that month. You must keep daily attendance records, according to your licensing Washington Administrative Code (WAC) for each day for each child. DSHS may ask you for attendance records to support your billing. DSHS will assess an overpayment to you if you do not have attendance records or your records weren't kept according to your licensing WAC. Keep your attendance records and invoices for children who receive subsidies on the premises for at least five years.

Do I bill the same rate pre-printed on my invoice?

Check the rates on your invoice. DSHS pays your usual rate or the DSHS maximum rate for that child, **whichever is less**. If the preprinted rate is higher than your private pay rate or the DSHS maximum rate, write the lower rate in the space below the preprinted rate. Call the family's authorizing office* to have the rate changed. Billing incorrect rates may result in an overpayment to you. You must repay overpayments to DSHS. You can **not** change incorrect rates if you use Invoice Express. Correct the rate on your invoice and mail the invoice. Call the family's authorizing office* to have the rate changed.

Absent Day Calculation Chart

Use this chart to determine the correct number of days to bill when the authorization is for 22 full-days or 22 or more half-days.	# of days Absent	# of days to CLAIM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For authorizations of 22 full-days or half-days, the left column is the total number of days the child attended. The right column is the number of days to bill for on your invoice. For authorizations over 22 half-days you bill for an extra half-day each time the child is in care 5 or more hours per day. 	1	22
	2	22
	3	22
	4	22
	5	22
	6	21
	7	20
	8	19
	9	18
	10	17
	11	16
	12	15
	13	14
	14	13
	15	12
	16	11
	17	10
	18	9
	19	8
	20	7
	21	6
	22	0

* The family's authorizing office name and telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

How do I bill for absent days?

Example:

Willow's father works Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Willow needs care 3 days per week. You are authorized to provide child care for Willow for 9.5 hours a day, Monday through Wednesday. Because care is needed for more than 110 hours, the authorization is for 22 full-days.

At the end of the month you are ready to fill out your invoice. You review Willow's attendance record and see she did not miss any Mondays, Tuesdays, or Wednesdays.

Use one of the following methods to determine the correct amount of units to bill:

DSHS allows up to 5 absent days each month. Willow was absent 9 days, which is 4 more days than you are allowed to bill for ($9-5=4$). Subtract the 4 days from the 22 authorized days ($22-4=18$). You may bill 18 units for Willow that month.

OR

Count the absent days and use the Absent Day Calculation Chart on page 13.

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1 A	2
3	4 X	5 X	6 X	7 A	8 A	9
10	11 X	12 X	13 X	14 A	15 A	16
17	18 X	19 X	20 X	21 A	22 A	23
24	25 X	26 X	27 X	28 A	29 A	30
31						

The "X" indicates the days of attendance.

The "A" indicates absent days.

How do I bill absent days when a child is authorized for 22 full-days?

Example:

Blaine was authorized for 22 full-days. He needs child care Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. The family went on vacation and he missed 11 days of child care during the month.

At the end of the month you are ready to fill out your invoice. You review Blaine's attendance record and see he miss 11 days.

Use one of the following methods to determine the correct amount of units to bill:

DSHS allows up to 5 absent days each month. Blaine was absent 11 days, which is 6 more days than you are allowed to bill for ($11-5=6$). Subtract the 6 days from the 22 authorized days ($22-6=16$). You may bill 16 units for Blaine.

OR

Count the absent days and use the Absent Day Calculation Chart on page 13.

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					A 1	2
3	A 4	A 5	A 6	A 7	A 8	9
10	A 11	A 12	A 13	A 14	A 15	16
17	X 18	X 19	X 20	X 21	X 22	23
24	X 25	X 26	X 27	X 28	X 29	30
31						

The "X" indicates the days of attendance.

The "A" indicates absent days.

How do I bill absent days when a child is authorized for 22 or more half-days?

A full-time, half-day authorization is 22 days. The authorization may be for up to 30 half-days. This is so you may bill an additional half-day, up to 8 half-days, when the child is in care 5 or more hours on any one day. **The additional 8 half-days may not be billed as absent days.**

Example:

Marty is a school age child authorized for a maximum of 30 half-days. When you review your attendance record you see Marty was in care for 9 hours a day for the 6 days when the school was closed. Every day that Marty was in care for 5 or more hours you may bill for an additional half-day.

Use one of the following methods to determine the correct amount of units to bill:

Step1: DSHS allows up to 5 absent days each month. Marty was absent 8 days which is 3 more days than you are allowed to claim ($8-5=3$). Subtract the 3 days from the 22 authorized days ($22-3=19$). You may bill 19 half-days.

Step 2: Add an extra half-day for every day you provided care for 5 or more hours. Marty was in care more than 5 hours per day on 6 days during the month. Add the additional 6 half-days to the 19 half-days in Step 1 ($19+6=25$). You may bill a total of 25 half-days.

Step 1: Count the absent days and use the Absent Day Calculation Chart on page 13.

Step 2: Add an extra half-day for every day you provided care for 5 or more hours. Marty was in care more than 5 hours per day on 6 days during the month. Add the additional 6 half-days to the 19 half-days in Step 1 ($19+6=25$). You may bill a total of 25 half-days.

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1 X	2 X	3 X	4 X	5 X	6
7	8 X	9 X	10 A	11 A	12 A	13
14	15 9 Hrs	16 9 Hrs	17 A	18 9 Hrs	19 9 Hrs	20
21	22 9Hrs	23 9 Hrs	24 A	25 X	26 A	27
28	29 A	30 X	31 A			

The "X" indicates the days of attendance.

The "A" indicates absent days.

How do I bill absent days when an authorization starts after the first day of the month?

The days of the month before the authorization started are **not** absent days and you can **not** include them in your billing. You are allowed absent days during a partial month if the authorization is **ongoing** full-time (22 days or more) half-days or full-days.

Example:

Anthony is authorized to start at your child care on August 9th. He needs care Tuesday through Friday. The authorization is full-time ongoing. He attended 8 days after August 9th.

Count the total number of days in Anthony's authorization. Remember, DSHS considers each week as 5 days, even though Anthony only needs care Tuesday through Friday. The authorization starts August 9th. Your calendar shows the maximum you can bill is 17 days (Monday through Friday) in August. You may not claim more than 17 days for this partial month. You may not bill for any days before August 9th as absent days.

Care was full-time (22 full-days) and ongoing so the child is eligible for absent days. Do not use the Absent Day Chart for part month authorizations.

DSHS allows up to 5 absent days each month. Anthony was absent 9 days, 4 more days than you are allowed to claim (9-5=4). Subtract the 4 days from the 17 maximum days (17-4=13). You may bill for 13 days for the month of August.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 N/A	2 N/A	3 N/A	4 N/A	5 N/A	6
7	8 N/A	9 X	10 A	11 A	12 A	13
14	15 A	16 X	17 A	18 X	19 X	20
21	22 A	23 X	24 A	25 X	26 X	27
28	29 A	30 X	31 A			

The "X" indicates the days of attendance.

The "A" indicates absent days.

The "N/A" indicates days Marty was not authorized child care.

How do I bill absent days when an authorization ends in the midmonth?

Sometimes the original SSPS Notice states the authorization will end in the middle of the month. When this happens the total days billed cannot exceed the number of child care days authorized for that part of the month. Remember, when counting the total number of days DSHS considers each week as 5 days. You cannot count the days after the authorization end date as absent days. You are allowed absent days during the partial month if the authorization was ongoing and for full-time half-days, or full-time full-days.

Example:

Erin has been in your care for 3 months. She is authorized full-time, full-day. You knew her authorization would end on the 20th of the current month.

At the end of the month you review Erin's attendance. The maximum number of days you can bill is 14 (5 days per week from the 1st to the 20th). The authorization was ongoing and full-time. You are allowed 5 absent days. Erin was absent 3 days within the authorized time. Erin's absent days did not exceed the 5 days allowed for a full-time authorization. You may bill for the entire 14 authorized days.

Do not use the Absent Day Chart for part month authorizations.

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1 X	2
3	4 X	5 X	6 A	7 X	8 X	9
10	11 X	12 X	13 X	14 A	15 A	16
17	18 X	19 X	20 X	21 N/A	22 N/A	23
24	25 N/A	26 N/A	27 N/A	28 N/A	29 N/A	30
31						

The "X" indicates the days of attendance.

The "A" indicates absent days.

The "NA" indicates days Erin was not authorized for child care.

Can I bill absent days when a child leaves care unexpectedly before the end of the authorization?

If a child is authorized for ongoing and full-time child care, but leaves your care unexpectedly before the end of the month you are still allowed 5 absent days.

Example:

Alyssa was authorized for full-time, full-day care. You expected the authorization to continue for 3 more months. Alyssa's mother was laid off on the 15th of the month. When she picked Alyssa up that night she said Alyssa would no longer need child care.

Use one of the following methods to determine the correct amount of child care to bill.

Alyssa was absent 12 days, including a holiday. The holiday was after Alyssa left care so it is counted as an absent day. This is 7 more days than you are allowed to claim ($12 - 5 = 7$). Subtract the 7 days from the 22 authorized days ($22 - 7 = 15$). You may bill for 15 units for Alyssa that month.

OR

Count the absent days and use the Absent Day Calculation Chart on page 13.

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					X ¹	2
3	X ⁴	X ⁵	A ⁶	A ⁷	X ⁸	9
10	X ¹¹	X ¹²	X ¹³	X ¹⁴	X ¹⁵	16
17	A ¹⁸	A ¹⁹	A ²⁰	A ²¹	A ²²	23
24	H ²⁵	A ²⁶	A ²⁷	A ²⁸	A ²⁹	30
31						

The "X" indicates the days of attendance.

The "A" indicates absent days.

The "H" indicates a holiday.

How do I bill for holidays?

Example:

Merrik's authorization is for full-time, full-day child care. He is in your care for the entire month of July. There is one holiday in July: Independence Day.

At the end of the month you review your attendance records. You were closed for Independence Day on July 4th. The holiday is not counted as an absent day even though Merrik was not there. It is not a closure day even though you were closed.

DSHS allows up to 5 absent days each month. Merrik was absent 6 days, which is 1 more day than you are allowed to claim ($6-5=1$). Subtract the 1 day from the 22 authorized days ($22-1=21$). You may bill for 21 units for Merrik.

OR

Count the absent days and use the Absent Day Calculation Chart on page 13.

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1 X	2
3	4 H Closed	5 X	6 A	7 A	8 X	9
10	11 X	12 X	13 X	14 X	15 X	16
17	18 X	19 X	20 X	21 X	22 X	23
24	25 A	26 A	27 A	28 A	29 X	30
31						

The "X" indicates the days of attendance.

The "A" indicates absent days.

The "H" indicates the days you were closed for your official state holiday.

How do I bill when I am closed?

Example:

Madeleine and Rebekka are authorized for ongoing full-time, full-day care. Your attendance records show that Madeleine and Rebekka were both absent 6 days. You were closed for 5 days for your vacation and 1 day for professional training.

Use one of the following methods to determine the correct amount of child care to bill.

Step 1: DSHS allows up to 5 absent days each month. Madeleine and Rebekka were absent 6 days and you were closed 1 day for professional training. (Remember, bill professional training days as if you were open and the children attended.) The day of professional training does not count as an absent day. The children were absent a total of 6 days. That is 1 more day than you are allowed to claim ($6-5=1$). Subtract the 1 day from the 22 authorized days ($22-1=21$).

Step 2: You were closed for 5 days for vacation. Subtract the closure days from the 21 days in Step 1 ($21-5=16$). You may bill for 16 days for Madeleine and Rebekka.

OR

Step 1: Count the absent days and use the Absent Day Calculation Chart on page 13.

Step 2: You were closed for 5 days for vacation and 1 day for professional training. (Remember, bill professional training days as if you were open and the children attended.) Subtract the closure days from the 21 days in Step 1 ($21-5=16$). You may claim 16 days for Madeleine and Rebekka.

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1 A	2
3	4 A	5 A	6 A	7 A	8 A	9
10	11 X	12 Closed Professional Training	13 X	14 X	15 X	16
17	18 X	19 X	20 X	21 X	22 X	23
24	25 V	26 V	27 V	28 V	29 V	30
31						

The "A" indicates absent days.

The "X" indicates the days of attendance

The "V" indicates the days you were closed for your vacation.

What is a Child Care Authorization?

An authorization is the maximum amount of care the family is eligible for, not a guarantee of payment. You may not be eligible to bill for the total amount authorized.

To bill for care:

- The child must attend your child care at least one day that month.
- The family must continue to be eligible and authorized.
- You must keep daily attendance records, according to your licensing WAC for each child to support your billing.
- You must be a licensed or certified child care provider or a contracted seasonal day camp.

At the time DSHS establish an authorization, the family was eligible for child care subsidies. Sometimes the family's situation changes and they are no longer eligible. Contact the family's authorizing office* if you are concerned about changes in the family's eligibility. Overpayments may occur if you bill for child care during a time the family is not eligible.

For attendance requirements for:

- Licensed family home child cares see [WAC 388-296-0520](#).
- Child care centers see [WAC 388-295-7030](#).

You are required to keep attendance records and invoices for children who receive child care subsidies. The records must be kept on the premises for at least 5 years. DSHS considers it an overpayment if you do not have attendance records or your records do not meet the standards in your licensing WAC.

How does DSHS pay child care providers?

You will receive an invoice from DSHS by the last day of the month. This is called the regular invoice. The invoice lists each DSHS child care service you are authorized to provide. If you provided a DSHS child care service that is not listed on the invoice, contact the family's authorizing office.*

The first invoice for newly authorized child care might not arrive until the 12th of the month following the month you first provided authorized care. This is called a supplemental invoice.

*The family's authorizing office telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

How do I complete my service invoices?

Complete the invoice based on a careful review of attendance records. If you bill without any attendance records or you do not keep your records according to licensing WAC it is an overpayment. You may bill for child care by mailing the completed invoice or by calling Invoice Express. If you use Invoice Express you must still fill out your invoice, sign it, and keep it for your records. **Do not mail your invoice if you have billed by Invoice Express.**

Complete your invoice after the last day of that month so you can review the entire month of attendance. DSHS cannot process invoices until the first day of the following month.

Step 1: When you receive the invoice, check to make sure everything is correct. Do **not** make any changes to your name or address on the invoice. If your name or address is incorrect, call your DSHS child care licensor. If a child's name is incorrect, or you have questions regarding the rates or units authorized, call the family's authorizing office. * Do **not** write comments or questions on your invoice or attach notes. The only thing you can change on your invoice is the rate. Step 3 explains how to change rates.

Step 2: To bill, you must fill in the section on the SSPS billing invoice called "TOTAL UNITS." Bill only for the child care related to the family's approved activities, such as employment (some programs approve training). Use whole numbers when entering units. If you enter 8.5 or 8 ½ DSHS will mail the invoice back to you for corrections.

When you are paid at the half-day rate, DA (day) is preprinted in the section for "SERVICE UNITS." For "TOTAL UNITS," check your attendance records and write in the total number of half-days you are claiming for that month. (A half-day is fewer than 5 hours a day.) A full-time, half-day authorization is 22 units. Up to 30 half-days may be authorized to allow you to bill an additional half-day when 5 or more hours of care are provided for that child on any given day. See page __ for information on how to bill half-days.

If you did not provide care for the child that month, write "0" in the "Total Units" box. **If a "Total Units" box is left blank, DSHS will return the invoice to you for correction.**

You cannot bill for more days than the pre-printed number in the "TOTAL UNITS" box. The pre-printed number is the maximum number of half-days authorized for that child.

When you are paid at a full-day rate, DA (day) is pre-printed in the “SERVICE UNITS” boxes. For “TOTAL UNITS,” check your attendance records and write in the number of full days you are billing for that month. A full-day is 5 or more hours of care per day. The number you claim cannot be more than the pre-printed number in the “TOTAL UNITS” box. The pre-printed number is the maximum number of full-days authorized for that child. See page __ for more information on how to bill for full-days. When you did not provide care that month, write “0” in the “Total Units” box. **If the “Total Units” box is left blank the invoice will be returned to you for correction.**

Step 3: Check to be sure the rate in the “AUTHORIZED RATE” section is correct. The number of units multiplied by the rate equals the maximum amount authorized for the month. If the preprinted rate is more than the rate you usually charge or more than the DSHS maximum rate for that child, write the correct rate in the space below the preprinted rate. Write the corrected rate in dollars and cents. If the correct amount is twelve dollars write 12.00. An entry of 12 will be processed as a rate of twelve cents. Call the family’s authorizing office* to have the rate changed. Billing for incorrect rates may result in an overpayment to you. You must repay overpayments to DSHS.

Incorrect rates cannot be changed if you use Invoice Express. If the rate on your invoice is above your private rate or the DSHS maximum rate for that child, correct the rate on the invoice and mail your invoice. Call the family’s authorizing office* to have the rate changed.

Step 4: Sign the invoice. Make a copy for your records. Either mail the invoice to DSHS or use Invoice Express.

The School Holiday box is only used for exempt/in-home child care. **Do not use this box.**

How do I use Invoice Express to bill by phone?

You may use the 24-hour Invoice Express system and bill by phone. Invoice Express saves processing and mailing time because you enter your billing information directly into the system. To use Invoice Express, complete your invoice as you normally would and keep it for your records. Then call **1-888-461-8855**. Invoice Express can be accessed in English or Spanish.

* The family’s authorizing office telephone number is on the Social Service Notice.

What is Direct Deposit?

You may have your payments electronically transferred to your bank account rather than receiving a paper check in the mail. If you are interested in this option, ask for a Direct Deposit application from SSPS. Send or fax your request to the address below. Your local office can also provide you with an application.

It takes 4-6 weeks after your application is received to set up direct deposit. Meanwhile, you will continue to receive your check by mail.

To be eligible to receive payments by Direct Deposit you must:

- Have a stable bank account (an account that remains open and in good standing with the bank)
- Have no liens/garnishments on your SSPS payments

SSPS address: DSHS-SSPS Attn: Direct Deposit Desk
P.O. Box 45812
Olympia, WA 98504-5812
Fax: 360-664-6182

When will I receive my payment?

When you receive your payment depends on how you submit your billing to DSHS.

- **If you mail your invoice and receive your check by mail** –DSHS will mail the check to you within 12 working days.
- **If you mail your invoice and use direct deposit** - DSHS will deposit the check in your account on the 5th working day after DSHS processes the invoice.
- **If you use Invoice Express and have direct deposit** – DSHS will deposit the check in your account on the 5th working day after you call in the invoice.
- **If you use Invoice Express and receive your check by mail** – DSHS will mail your check on the 2nd business day after you have called in your invoice.

What do I do if I have a payment problem?

Lost invoice: If your invoice does not come by the 3rd working day of the month after the month you provided care, call the family's authorizing office.*

Please note: Your first invoice for a newly authorized child may not arrive until around the 12th of the month after the month you first provided authorized care.

Wrong Information: If your name or address is wrong on the invoice, contact your DSHS child care licensor. Call the family's authorizing office* if the family's request for care does not match the child's authorization.

Underpayment: If you make a mistake on your invoice that causes you to be underpaid, or if you do not receive payment for everything you claimed on the invoice, call the family's authorizing office.*

Overpayment: If you are overpaid, call the family's authorizing office* and report the overpayment.

Late Payment: If it has been more than 12 working days since you billed DSHS (by mail or Invoice Express) and you have not received payment, call the family's authorizing office.*

Who do I call to check on a family's status?

The Working Connection Information Phone (WCIP) is an automated service allowing you access to a family's WCCC eligibility. By calling **1-800-218-3244** you can hear:

- The status (approved, denied, or pending) of an authorization
- Types of child care services, including the monthly copayment, authorized for payment and the dates covered for approved authorization
- Special messages about WCCC

Information about the other child care subsidy programs can **not** be accessed through the WCIP.

*The family's authorizing office telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

What is a copayment?

Most of the child care subsidy programs require families to pay part of their child care costs each month. DSHS calls this a copayment. The Social Services Notice states the amount of the family's monthly copayment.

Families pay their copayments directly to you. DSHS sends you a check for the amount you bill minus the copayment. Your total payment will equal your private rate or the DSHS maximum rate for the amount of care you billed, **whichever is less**.

You may collect the copayment on the same day of the month you collect child care payments from private paying families. If your written policy includes late fees when payments are not paid on time, you can charge the family late fees when the copayment is not paid on time. **If the family does not pay their copayment, contact the family's authorizing office.* Families may lose child care benefits if they do not pay their copayment.**

May I charge the family for additional services?

You may charge families who receive DSHS child care subsidies for the following services only if you have a written policy to charge all families for these services:

- The family requests child care for personal reasons (for example, the child is picked up later than scheduled because the parent went shopping)
- The family requests optional programs for their child (gymnastics, ballet, etc.)
- The family requests your optional lunch program for their child
- The child is picked up after your operating hours
- The family pays the monthly copayment late
- The actual cost of field trip fees exceeding the \$20.00 maximum paid by DSHS
- The family asks you to transport their children to and from school or activities

You may not charge the family the difference when your:

- Private rate for child care is more than the DSHS maximum child care rate
- Registration fee is more than the DSHS maximum registration fee

If a child who is authorized for full-time care is absent more than five days in one month, you may not bill DSHS or the family for the additional absent days.

*The family's authorizing office telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

What is a child care overpayment and when might I have an overpayment?

If you bill DSHS for more than you should have it is an overpayment. DSHS will send you a Vendor Overpayment Notice if it was determined you were overpaid. If you have questions about the overpayment there is a telephone number you can call on the bottom of the form. If you receive a Vendor Overpayment Notice and you do not agree that you have been overpaid you may dispute the overpayment. There are directions written on the Vendor Overpayment Notice that outline how to dispute the overpayment. If overpayments are not resolved by talking to DSHS or through a hearing, they must be repaid to DSHS.

Overpayments may occur if you bill:

- For more days than you were eligible to bill for based on the child's attendance
- When you do not have any attendance records (this results in an overpayment for the entire amount billed)
- When you have not kept attendance records as outlined by your licensing WAC
- When you are not licensed or certified by DSHS to provide child care
- For child care at a rate higher than you were eligible to receive
- For children older or younger than the ages you are licensed for, without a waiver

Follow the billing rules in this booklet. They will help you bill correctly and avoid underpayments and overpayments.

*The family's authorizing office telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

What are my responsibilities as a child care provider?

If you want to receive child care subsidy payments you must:

- Operate a facility that is licensed or certified by DSHS, or operate a contracted Seasonal Day Camp
- Keep attendance records as described in [WAC 388-296-0520](#) for Family Home Child Cares, as described in [WAC 388-295-7030](#) for Child Care Centers, and [WAC 388-151-460](#) for School Age Child Care Centers. (Attendance records and invoices for state-paid children must be kept on the premises for at least 5 years.)
It is an overpayment if you do not have any attendance records or your attendance records are not kept according to WAC
- Complete your invoices with accurate information **based on your attendance records**, and follow the billing guidelines in this booklet
- Contact the family and/or the family's authorizing office* if you have questions or concerns

What are the family's responsibilities?

The family is responsible to:

- Report to their authorizing office*, any changes in providers, employment, or amount of child care needed that may affect eligibility for child care subsidies. Not reporting a change may result in an overpayment to the family or termination of their DSHS child care subsidies
- Report any changes in the amount of care needed for approved activities to their child care provider
- Pay their monthly copayment
- Give DSHS information so they can determine the family's eligibility and authorize child care correctly
- Choose a provider who meets requirements of WAC [388-290-0125](#) and make their own child care arrangements
- Leave their children in care only for DSHS approved activities or arrange to pay you directly for any additional care

*The family's authorizing office telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

What are DSHS' responsibilities?

DSHS is responsible to:

- Establish a family's eligibility for subsidized child care
- Authorize and pay for an eligible family's child care
- Give a family 10 days advance written notice if their child care benefits will be reduced or stopped prior to the original date on the Social Services Notice
- Assist in answering payment-related questions or concerns

Case situations and resolutions

1. Situation

You are caring for two children who are authorized for half-day care through a DSHS child care subsidy program. The children attend for about four hours per day, five days per week. Suddenly, the children start attending eight hours per day, five days per week. What should you do?

Resolutions

Talk to the family. Remind the parent they are using more hours of care than DSHS authorized. The parent needs to contact their DSHS authorizing office* if they need more care due to an increase in an approved activity. When appropriate, the authorizing office will change the authorization. For WCCC, you may contact the **Working Connections Information Phone, 1-800-218-3244**, to verify that the authorization has changed. You may also call the authorizing office.*

If the family needs more child care for personal reasons, you may bill the family directly according to your policies for private paying families.

2. Situation

A child with a full-time, full-day authorization (22 days) was absent all month. The DSHS absence policy allows you to bill up to 5 absent days when a child is authorized for full-time child care. Can you bill for the child that month?

Resolutions

No. To bill the child must be authorized for 22 full-days or 22 or more half-days **and** attend at least one day that month. If the child does not attend at least one day in that month, you may **not** bill for that month.

*The family's authorizing office telephone number is on the Social Services Notice.

3. Situation

DSHS child care subsidies pay you to care for a child while the parent is at work. The parent said they lost their job but wants to continue to bring the child while they look for work. Can you continue to bill DSHS for the care?

Resolutions

Child care subsidies pay for child care when the parent is participating in a DSHS approved activity. Some child care programs consider job search an approved activity. Encourage the parent to contact the DSHS authorizing office* to ensure the child care authorization will continue while they look for work. You may want to contact the family's authorizing office* if you have concerns. If the authorization is through WCCC you may contact the **Working Connections Information Phone, 1-800-218-3244** if you have questions about the family's continued eligibility.

4. Situation

DSHS is paying you child care subsidies to care for three children in one family. During the school's spring break a stepchild comes to stay with the family. The parent asks you to watch the child and says DSHS might pay for the care.

Resolutions

To ensure DSHS will pay for this child's care, you may ask the parent to give you written information from DSHS to verify the child was authorized. If the care is authorized through WCCC you may call the **Working Connection Information Phone, 1-800-218-3244**, for the current status of the case.

5. Situation A family comes to you and says DSHS will pay for their child care. Mom says the children need to start today or she will lose her job. She says the DSHS authorizing worker promised it would be okay.

Resolutions

If you do not have the Social Services Notice that shows the child care was authorized it may not be covered by DSHS. You can call the Working Connections Information Phone (you must have the consumer's application number) or ask the authorizing worker to fax a copy of the authorization. Sometimes, the authorization information can be picked up at the DSHS office. A verbal okay of an authorization, by a parent or an authorizing worker, is not a guarantee of payment. If you do not have written proof from DSHS that the children are authorized you may charge the family for child care.

*The family's authorizing office and telephone number are on the Social Services Notice.

What is the Seasonal Child Care Subsidy Program?

The Seasonal Child Care Subsidy Program is a specialized child care subsidy program. It is only available in some areas of Washington State. DSHS contracts with community agencies to provide the authorization service, based on eligibility criteria developed by DSHS.

Does the Seasonal program follow the same rules as other child care subsidy programs?

The Seasonal program only authorizes child care to licensed centers or family home child cares. In-Home/Relative care is not authorized through the Seasonal Child Care program.

Seasonal Child Care varies slightly from the other DSHS child care subsidy programs. The program is designed to meet the special child care needs of families who are seasonally employed in agriculturally related work. Agricultural work may require long days and weekend work. During peak harvest times, a family may need child care more than 10 hours a day. DSHS may authorize additional weekend and hourly care when a family needs more than 22 full-days of child care.

When is Seasonal child care authorized for more than 10 hours per day?

DSHS child care subsidy programs define a full day of care as 5-10 hours per day. If a family authorized for Seasonal Child Care needs more than 10 hours of care per day, additional care may be authorized in one of the two following ways:

Regularly scheduled hours over 10 hours per day

When seasonal families work a regularly scheduled day that requires child care for more than 10 hours per day, additional care (usually “half-days”) may be authorized. When additional half-days are authorized, bill DSHS your usual rate or the DSHS maximum rate, **whichever is less**.

Varied scheduled hours over 10 hours per day

During peak harvesting times, a family authorized for Seasonal Child Care may need child care more than 10 hours a day. When the number of child care hours vary daily and exceed 10 hours per day, the family may be authorized for 22 full-days and hourly care.

Keep track daily of the exact number of hours over 10 hours per day that the child is in your care. At the end of the month add up the hours that were more than 10 hours of care on any day. Bill only the total number of hours that you provided care over 10 hours a day under the hourly care service code. You may **not** bill for any time the child is absent under the hourly service code.

When is Seasonal child care authorized for more than 22 full-days?

At peak harvesting times, families may need to work more than 5 days per week. When care is needed more than 22 full-days a month, weekend care may be authorized. For weekend care, bill only the actual days the child attended. **Absent days are not allowed in the weekend care authorization.**

For examples:

A family needs child care Monday through Saturday, six days per week, for 9 hours each day during September. The authorization will appear as 22 full-days and an additional 4 full-days for weekend care. The additional 4 units per month of weekend care allows you to bill for Saturdays. If the child attends 3 Saturdays that month, you bill for three units under the weekend care service code. **Do not** bill if the child does not attend weekend care. Absent days are only allowed for full time authorizations that are for 22 full-days or 22 or more half-days.

A family needs child care Monday through Saturday from 7:00am – 7:00pm (12 hours per day). Because care is needed over 10 hours each day the family may be authorized for 22 units of both full-day and half-day units. They may also be authorized for 4 full-day and half-day for each Saturday in the month.

Remember:

You may only bill absent days when 22 full-days or 22 or more half-days are authorized. You may **not** bill absent days for weekend care, as there are not 22 units of care authorized.

NOTE: Seasonal child care only covers care for the family's employment. If the family leaves their child in care for personal reasons, you may bill the family for those hours.